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INDIAN MUSIC.

THIRTY years ago, when the *peripetia* of the Crimean War were quickening the pulses of Englishmen as feverishly as do the incidents of the Soudan campaign at the present time, it was by no means an uncommon incident of a stroll through London streets to encounter a lean, shivery foreign person with a complexion the colour of curry-powder, chiefly clad in linen and presenting an appearance, generally speaking, of profound and chronic discomfiture. This saffron-hued alien, when shambling along the pavement of a crowded thoroughfare, was rarely vocal or instrumental; but if you happened to meet him in fashionable or suburban regions far away from the bustle and roar of the business centres, you invariably found him singing the songs of his native land to the accompaniment of a peculiarly depressing oblong drum, shaped like a roley-poley pudding, upon either skin-clad end of which he beat incessantly with his knuckles. As an unsophisticated child I remember to have asked those set in authority over me what manner of man this might be, and to have been informed that he was "the poor Indian, whose untutored, &c.," and that the instrument he percutated with such distracting persistency was the tom-tom. At the period I refer to there were a good many of these dingy Oriental soloists about town, to me quite undistinguishable from one another. They all looked exactly alike, and did exactly the same things; things, I am bound to say, almost unbearable to a child afflicted with a musical ear. Their melodies were composed of random notes, alternately howled and moaned to dismal monosyllables, all vowels and liquids, something after this manner: "La-la-lo-na-ma-na-lo-la," and so on *ad infinitum*, with the dub, dub, dub, dub of the roley-poley drum *obligato* all the while, as intolerably iterative as the thumping of the pistons in the innermost parts of an ocean steamer struggling along at high pressure against a head wind and a heavy sea—thumps which generate responsive throbs in the temples and qualms in the midriff of the unseaworthy passenger. I remember being incredulous, as a boy, as to these lyrics having any meaning; to me, and I have no doubt to the majority of my contemporaries, youthful or adult, they sounded like mere gibberish—an idiot's tale, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing. The knowledge of riper years leads me nowadays to surmise that they may have been romantic narratives, such as "The Sports of Krishna," otherwise Samodadomodaro (they sounded very like it); or love songs of the Sakandkshapundarikash class; or haply epithalamia, such as Maninivar-

nane Chaturachaturbhuj; which, I may remark for the information of concert-room vocalists, is sung to the music Deshiyavarādi and in the mode Ashtatāli. Moreover, in the ninth Sarga of the Gita Govinda, intituled Kalahantaritavarnane Mugdhamukundo, there is a plaintive ditty, the burden of which runs thus:—"Mā kooro mānī mānamayē" (My proud one, do not indulge in scorn); and this, I feel convinced, the ginger-complexioned songsters of my boyhood's days must have been addicted to yelling, for it lends itself so very aptly to the style of voice-production they particularly affected. According to Jayadeva, the inspired author of the Gita Govinda, the *refrain* in question should be sung to the music Gurjari, and in the mode Yati. If those saffron minstrels complied with his instructions, I can only say that the music of Gurjari may have been extremely pleasing to the Raga Megh, a divine fundamental melody, of which, or rather of whom (for the Ragas ranked as deities in the quaint old Hindoo mythology), she, Gurjari, was the third wife; but that its effect upon Western organisations lacking, perhaps, the subtlety of sense required for the appreciation of its beauties, was curiously dispiriting.

Edwin Arnold, one of the greatest of English living poets, who has endowed us with an incomparably beautiful version of Jayadeva's masterpiece, the Indian "Song of Songs," tells us that from time immemorial music was always taught orally by the Hindoos, and did not, therefore, pass down through the ages from the old minstrels in any notated form. It is thus that he accounts for the failure of that illustrious Oriental scholar, Sir William Jones, to discover the original music of the Gita Govinda, notwithstanding the indications afforded by the author, who has prefixed to each of its successive lyrics the name of the "mode" in which it was to be sung. It seems that in the course of his quest after the melodies of the Hindoo Canticle, the Pundits of the South referred Sir William to those of the West, who again referred him to the Northern Brahmins, these latter in their turn declaring that they had no ancient music, but imagined that the notes of the Gita Govinda must exist, if anywhere, in the land of Jayadeva's birth. Edwin Arnold, however, has ascertained that an elaborate science of melody was familiar to the ancient Indians, who—like the Greeks of yore—understood little or nothing of harmony. According to this paramount authority upon every branch of Oriental art, the distinguishing feature of Hindoo airs still is, as it was in olden times, an extremely fine gradation of notes, which permits the accurate sub-division of the semitone into demi-semitones, on



voices and stringed instruments alike, by the native executant. This faculty of subdivision imparts a certain captivating delicacy of *nuances*, recognizable by all cultivated musicians, to the otherwise monotonous temple-singing of India.

Nisikânta Chattopâdhyâya, the author of an instructive treatise on the Yâtrâs, or popular dramas of Bengal—for the most part miracle-plays like the mediaeval Christian “Mysteries”—after observing that these dramas consist principally of songs, always provided with their respective melodies and cadences, says that the Hindoos have always been ardent lovers of music. Even in the most ancient period of their literature may be found minute directions how the verses of the Sâma-Veda are to be sung by officiating priests, according to the three different intonations called Uddatta, Anudatta and Svarita. “Gânât parataram nahi” (There is nothing superior to song) is an Indian proverb of extraordinary antiquity, and the Hindoo musical literature is very extensive. Dâmodara, a renowned writer upon the Divine Art, in his “Mirror of Song” (Sangîta-Darpanam) describes the Hindoo musical scale as being composed of seven tones, types of natural sound; viz., suruj, the peacock’s screech; rikhur, the parrot’s cry; gundhur, the bleat of the sheep; muddhun, the crane’s call; punchum, the note of the koil, an Indian bird; dhyyut, the horse’s neigh: and nikhad, the trumpeting of the elephant. The notes of the gamut are generally indicated by the first syllables of their designations, su, ri, gu, mu, pu, dhu and ni. Out of these seven primitive tones are formed six Ragas or divine fundamental airs, named Bhairava, Mâlakosha, Hindola, Dipaka, Crîrâga and Megh, each of whom has five wives (Ragini). Again, each Ragini has borne to her Raga spouse eight melodious children, the Uparâgas, or minor tunes; so that, according to Edwin Arnold, the orthodox repertory of Indian vocal music, or Hindoo “Little Warbler,” contains two hundred and forty distinct and individual songs, each having its fixed occasion, subject and season, all to be reverently observed; as otherwise the deity presiding over each separate lyric was not thought likely to attend and give perfect effect to the music. “These lyric divinities,” writes the author of “The Light of Asia,” are personified and described in such works as the “Ratnamala;” thus “Gurjjari” (a melodic manner frequently prescribed for use by Jayadeva in the Indian “Song of Songs”) “is represented as a feminine minstrel of engaging mien, dressed in a yellow bodice and red sari richly bedecked with jewels, and enthroned in a golden swing.”

By the Hindoo Pundits of old, musical science was divided into seven branches; surudhyaya, or solfeggio; tal, or time; nrit, or rhythmical dancing; aurth, or poetry; rag, or melody; bhav, or expression; and hust, answering to method, or touch. Endless constructive subtleties characterised these musical terms. “Thus,” (I quote again from Arnold’s preface to his version of the *Gita Govinda*) “tal, or time, is a word made up of

the first letters of tand, the dance of Mahados, and las, the dance of his consort Parvati. But these are mere etymological niceties, characteristic of the hard language in which one single word may be written in a hundred and eight ways.” According to the erudite Nisikânta Chattopâdhyâya, the same spirit of nice distinctions and minute analysis is manifest in the divisions of the various cadences (Tâlalaya) into which each Raga, Ragini, and Uparâga is appropriately fitted.

Hindoo musical instruments are of four classes—(1) tata, the lute kind; (2) sushira, the flute kind; (3) avanaddha, the drum kind; (4) ghana, the bell kind. Of these, the lute proper, or vînâ, was formerly the national instrument *par excellence*. Sarasvati, the Hindoo goddess of learning and music, and Rishi Nârada, the most popular of Indian Saints, are always represented holding a vînâ, and, in the Jajurvedas, Jâjnavalkya is described as the inventor of an instrument of this sort having a hundred strings. The European voice-registers are known to the Hindoos by the names udara (bass), mudara (tenor), and tara (soprano). Râgas, Raginis, and Uparâgas, which may be roughly defined in English as rudimentary airs, melodic methods and perfected popular tunes, must—so says Nisikânta—be carefully adjusted to the divers feelings or states of mind which songs are meant to express, and are invariably so adjusted in the Miracle-Plays, lyrical dramas still so popular in Bengal that they are acted there not only thrice a year, during the three feasts and processions in honour of Krishna, but in all months and seasons upon festive occasions, religious or secular. The Yâtrâ songs are said to be as numerous as the stars, and the list of Hindoo composers, from the tenth century down to the present time, would fill a portly tome. Of cotemporary Indian song-writers, or rather song-setters, Rajah Caurindra Mohan Tagore is at once the most fertile and popular. I have, unfortunately, been unable to get hold of a single specimen of his creative ability as a melodist; but, from what I have gathered from Indian acquaintances respecting the character of his compositions, I should imagine that he must be the Jack Hatton of Hindostan.

Not even the great authorities to whom I am indebted for so much valuable information upon the subject of Indian music have been able to find out the name of the *maestro* who composed the music of the *Gita Govinda*, probably the most ancient opera in existence; by the way, Nisikânta compares it and other Yâtrâs of equal antiquity to the *Pastorals* of Tasso and Guarini, in which songs predominated over dialogue, and which, moreover, treated of shepherds and shepherdesses, as did the popular Indian lyrical drama. Edwin Arnold, who has heard all these pieces performed in the best manner by native artists, is of opinion that the special music composed to the “Song of Songs,” could it be recovered from the limbo of ages and rendered intelligible to European musicians by the aid of modern notation, would add immensely to the interest of the Sanskrit Canticle. Even at present, he says, any competent inquirer into the

existing melodies of India, popular and sacred, might find his research rewarded by many exquisite airs, worthy of study by Western composers and music-lovers. Perhaps the English ear is not quite finely trained enough yet to relish demi-semitones, which appear to constitute the peculiar charm and special attraction of Hindoo songs; but experiments in India vocalism would, I have no doubt, be listened to with the greatest interest by London amateurs were any opportunity of hearing it afforded to them. Where, however, are Indian songs, printed or in manuscript, to be obtained? I have put this question to several "old Indians," in succession, without, however, obtaining anything like a satisfactory answer. One or two have expressed their conviction that Hindoo music cannot be adequately expressed by European notation; and this may be so, if demi-semitones constitute one of its chief integral elements. At any rate, I have failed in all my endeavours to obtain a sight of any Indian musical composition, vocal or instrumental, although Edwin Arnold distinctly states that the Indians of to-day have still their dhoopuds, or heroic ballads; their kheals, ghuzuls and rekhtahs, love-songs of Mogul derivation; their dadras and nuktahs, serenades of Hindoo origin; the tuppah, hummed by Hindi and Punjabi camel-drivers; the terana, or "song without words;" the palna, or cradle-song; the sohla, or marriage strain; the stooti, or eulogistic chants, and the zikri, which are hymns of morality. It is possible that among these varieties of vocal music, some echoes of the antique melodies to which Jayadeva's admirable lyrics were set, may be preserved; for conservatism in every sort of art is a leading Hindoo characteristic. Perhaps those chilly strangers with the gamboge cheeks and opaline eye-balls, with whom old memories prompt me to associate Indian music, knew how to sing the loves of Radha and Krishna as they were sung by skilled gundharbs or goonees about the time at which Henry II. reigned over England, and could have chanted the demi-semitonic scales with all the accuracy and finish not infrequently displayed by the common or garden cat in practising that description of vocal exercise. Alas! those Asiatic minstrels are no longer perceptible to the naked eye in London streets. The Indian Mutiny put English folk out of conceit with songsters who independently of the fact that their performances were a very stomach-ache of sound, looked as if they might have been own brothers to the merciless traitors who butchered English women and children at Cawnpore. An unreasonable fancy, very likely; but it certainly knocked the Hindoo vocalist's profession on the head, as far as this country was concerned.

WM. BEATTY-KINGSTON.

LOST ARTS.

ARTISTS, architects, and antiquarians (unavoidable alliteration) tell us that certain processes of manufacture or design have completely passed out of use and memory. Things which were apparently

among those "most generally known" have left so few if any traces of their processes of manufacture that they are now regretfully classed among the arts lost to mankind. Those who have had the opportunities of examining some of the illuminated manuscripts of the Middle Ages will not have failed to remark the gold ornaments in the capital letters of these illuminations, which retain their brightness notwithstanding the lapse of centuries. On the desk, as I write, side by side with each other, is a beautiful little "Book of Devotions," in Latin, written, in some English monastery, about the year 1350, and a testimonial inscription written, on vellum, in the year of grace 1867. A comparison of the work on each does not reflect to the credit of the latter. The gold has tarnished, the colours look washed out, and the once lustrous ink has faded into the proverbial "dandy-grey-russet." The five hundred years which have passed since the little book was written have apparently affected it no more than if the work had been executed only last week. The ink with which the body of the text is inscribed is as black and legible as ever. Of the two, the parchment list of names is apparently the older, as far as appearance is concerned, but the date stands as proof to the contrary. The conclusion to be derived from the observation is, that the art of making and using materials which are so permanent in texture is lost. This is not the only product of art of the barbarous or dark ages which the moderns, with all their skill and ability, imitative and originative, cannot equal, much less surpass. Where is the glorious ruby colour of the ante-fifteenth century glass windows? where is the power which created such poetry in stone as that which characterises the architecture of many of our old English cathedrals? All lost and gone beyond the power of recall. The skill of Scott, of Pugin, and others, the greatest among modern architects, is unable to infuse life into their patient imitations of certain of the most salient points of the old structures. They may be Pygmalions who have created fresh Galateas worthy of all the admiration they can bestow upon them; but the gods disregard the work of their hands, and withhold the fire which would give life to their still cold and meaningless stone.

There are numbers of Galateas in music, created by Pygmalions who have ceased to breathe themselves. They could be inspired with temporary life, however, not by the gods, but by those who were said to sacrifice to them continually, and to adore the whole of the muses at once.

The intelligent musical reader will easily interpret the allusion here made, as referring to the master works of the composers of the past, which remain to the admiration of an existing generation.

The chief of these which bear upon the purpose set out in the design of this paper are the Verse Anthem and the Glee, inasmuch as the proper performance of each belongs to the list of arts that are lost.

The causes which have contributed to bring this matter about are many. As regards the anthem

they are perhaps the necessary and natural result of the efforts made to revive Church feeling among the masses, and to make even the Cathedral service Congregational. When it became possible to attract large bodies of worshippers to the services held in the various Cathedrals throughout the land, a change was necessary. The ordinary musical material at disposal was inadequate to the new demand. The anthems and services then in common use required special ability and experience for their due interpretation. The new services called into employment an amateur choir more or less unskilled and inexperienced. It was requisite to provide music within the reach of their capabilities. Settings of the Canticles in unison, with Hymn-tunes instead of Anthems, supplied the place of the former use in cathedrals. The full organ employed by the organist—often as a relief to his feelings as a musician—gave the idea of hearty congregational singing, for the people did sing, apparently heartily and certainly happily on their side, under the encouragement of the loud organ. The organist now became what he made his instrument, a power, and the setting of the Canticles and Anthems for all occasions, ferial and festal, became organ solos, with accompaniments of more or less importance for voices. Unison passages for the singers, which at one time were considered as evidence of want of invention or a proof of idleness on the part of the composer, became common, and were regarded as the expressions of originality and of sympathy with modern ideas. So common in fact, that there is scarcely a service or an anthem written within the last ten years, with a view to being adopted, and put to frequent use, that does not make full and frequent use of unison passages. The performance of such works demands vociferation rather than vocalisation. The singers shout rather than sing. The more noise that is made, the better is the purpose fulfilled. The whole of the conditions of the performance of music in cathedrals are reversed. The employment of "unison" in music, which was at one time regarded as retrogressive, is now hailed as an indication of progressive views.

The organ is exalted far above its legitimate use as an aid and accompaniment to such portions of the service as are illustrated by music. The smallest churches are eager to possess the largest possible organ their space will admit, and in the prosecution of this view frequently hamper themselves with a monster beyond all proportion and comfortable management. Regarded from a musical point of view, there may be some gain to the few who are musically sensitive in having a preponderance of accurate tone forced upon the ear, rather than the untuneful utterances of an untrained congregation whose devotional singing but imperfectly expresses their delight in this form of religious exercise. If, however, as is not infrequently the case, an unmusical congregation is led by one whose competency at the organ has been submitted to no other test than that which is furnished by his own good nature, the effect is not exalting, much less

exhilarating. The nominal enthusiasm increases in proportion to the absence of ability. Many parish churches and chapels, inspired by the practices of some cathedral which has been taken as a model, carry to exaggeration that which may only have been adopted by the prototype as a matter of expediency. These things in turn press upwards as the waters in a tidal river turn on their bed. The results from a musical standpoint are the same, though they may be brought about by different means.

The chief of these is the encouragement of musical compositions which minister to this desire to be congregational, or at all events to be thought so. The value of these productions may be only ephemeral, but they possess the power of forcing out of sight many more valuable things written for the same purpose under different conditions, and what is worse, of destroying by neglect the power to perform them properly. It is not an unusual thing to find the Cathedrals attended by large congregations on such days, when by chance one of the old anthems by the classical Church composers is set down for a hearing. The older among the congregation, who can remember how these "Chamber Compositions" as they are now called in a somewhat contemptuous vein, were once given, are disappointed at themselves for what they conceive to be the treachery of memory of former pleasures. The younger, mindful of what may have been said concerning the beauties of these old works, and failing to recognise any, through the medium of weak and indifferent interpretation, bolstered up by a liberal supply of organ, endorse the opinion which it is probably desired that they should entertain concerning them, and commend the new and despise the old. The new is not made any better for such a use and treatment, nor is the old any worse. The fact of the matter is simply this, the old Verse Anthems of the Church are seldom, if ever, properly interpreted. The tradition has been broken. The harp may be hung on the willows, for these have become the Songs of Zion, which cannot be given in a strange land. The art of anthem singing is lost. Whether it will ever be regained is extremely doubtful. Like the art of illuminating manuscripts, or of staining glass, it has become lost by the interruption of the current of the tradition by means unconducive to its maintenance. It has been sneered out of its course as many other useful and ornamental matters have been, and will continue to be. The village band which supplied the church with interesting instrumental tone, and kept the sweet influence of music alive and well nourished on hearty if not upon delicate food in many a remote place, was jeered out of existence. Stories were told to the detriment of the band, their little disaffections were magnified, their motives were said to be selfishness and profanity, and their claims to be considered as equally eager and interested in contributing to the beauty of holiness, with other members of the congregation, were altogether ignored. They have retreated

under a volley of contemptuous laughter, perhaps never to return. The Christian spirit which prompted such a treatment of fellow worshippers has never been commented upon. Perhaps those who led the movement and those who followed it, never thought it was within the catalogue of items concerning one's duty to one's neighbour. At all events the band has disappeared. It is not in the nature of that to become another of the lost arts, but the process which has silenced the one has lost to the church a power which it should have been careful to have preserved.

Of course, it will be urged by those who consider themselves called upon to defend the matter, in all its bearings, that these changes have taken place in obedience to the inevitable law of progress. The things have served their turn and must be superseded. Being superseded they need not be regretted. The monuments remain to show what has been done in times past. The student, who is likely to be interested in such things, will be able pretty fairly to judge of their capabilities, even though they may remain for ever silent to his ear.

Let the position be accepted as concerns the Verse Anthem, there remains yet another musical item, the art of performing which is fast disappearing, even if it is not already lost. This is the Glee. Like the anthem, it is peculiarly English, and is the outcome of a special application of certain musical studies on the British brain. The British brain, which was best capable of dealing with this special phase of musical art, was limited in the period of time over which it was subject to the influence. Although the first work called a glee bears date 1660—Thomas Brewer's "Turn Amaryllis,"—it is doubtful whether the title is contemporary with the production. There is no doubt, however, that that so-called glee is not a glee, but a part song. The composition of glee properly so-called began about 1770 with Dr. Arne, and ended about 50 years later with Reginald Spofforth. They represent in a distinct and forcible manner the mode of expression adopted by the musicians of the period, and legitimately show the preference English musicians always have had for vocal, in contrast to instrumental utterance. It is only of late years that our native musicians have displayed any tendency to the employment of a means which has stronger fascinations for the musicians of other countries—namely, the orchestra, and certain solo instruments, except the organ. There is a large number of noble pieces of organ music by Englishmen, well known to those who seek wisdom through this door. Orchestral pieces by Englishmen are of modern date.

In the half-century of time spoken of as the "glee period" the composers of that date gave their most earnest attention to the production of glee. It is not necessary to quote their names, or to refer to their works further than to say that for continuity of idea and treatment they are excellent. The breaking of the composition, never too long, into short contrasted movements, was one of the modes by which this continuity of idea was

evidently sought to be conveyed. If a man desires to be particularly impressive he clothes his thoughts and expressions with varied speech. He may be perfectly and consistently continuous the whole time, even though he endeavours to invest his ideas with that variety which is proverbially said to be charming. His work, when done, may not be a "musical mosaic," but a perfect whole, invested with artistic differences. The charm of such works is accepted and acknowledged by all who have learned to appreciate the meaning of musical combinations, "mosaic" or otherwise. The power of singing them as they ought to be sung, to draw out their full intention is losing, if it has not already lost, its grasp upon the minds of modern vocalists. That the glee are frequently sung is perfectly true. For lack of knowledge of the traditional "use" their effect is often perfectly false.

They are rarely printed with more than the most rudimentary indications as to expression or pace. No two bodies sing the same thing alike. The allowance which may be made for the differences of personal temperament must not be forgotten in accounting for the want of uniformity. But uniformity was not always desirable in glee singing. In a good performance of glee uniformity was rarely attainable even from the same singers. These "musical mosaics" cannot be turned out like Birmingham goods, so many thousand "as per pattern," they must be sung artistically; there are not enough artistic glee singers capable of being brought together in the present day equal to the needs. Even in the best so-called "glee clubs or parties" there is always one, often more than one, who has been chosen to take a part because of the register of his voice, but who knows nothing of glee singing proper. So long as the thing is got through somehow, all conditions seem to be satisfied, but the fact remains the same, the art of glee singing is dying out, if it be not already dead.

Trumpet-playing is another of the lost arts in Music. There is not a player existent who can perform the trumpet part in Handel's *Messiah* as it is written. Differences of pitch may have something to do with this, but want of employment and encouragement has had much more. It is reasonable to assume that as Handel never wrote a note for a singer which could not be sung, so he ought not to be credited with having set down notes for a favourite instrument which could not be played. It is certain that they are not played, and not even attempted, even by those who substitute the vulgar cornet-à-pistons for the brilliant trumpet. It is therefore to be regretted that Trumpet-playing, like Anthem-singing, Glee-singing, illuminating manuscripts and staining glass will have to be classed among the "Lost Arts."

WM. BARRETT.

THE return of Herr Joachim has been the event of the month at the Popular Concerts. A more welcome valentine for the afternoon of the 14th Mr. Chappell could not have presented his patrons withal. The "king of violinists" was received with

the warmth that beffited one whose rank and popularity are beyond dispute, and his playing again afforded purest delight to amateurs who know and rightly value his incomparable gifts. So far, Herr Joachim has been content to bring forward his most familiar *chevaux de bataille*—leading “Rasonowski” and Mendelssohn quartets, and playing the Bach Chaconne, the “Trillo del Diavolo” Sonata, and the Adagio from Spohr’s sixth Concerto. Ere he departs, and his stay in our midst is all too brief, we shall hope to hear the gifted artist in one or two fresh works, or, at least, a few examples from the less hackneyed portion of his repertory. Among pianists, at the “Pops,” the lion’s share of labour has recently been borne by Mr. Max Pauer, who grows quickly yet surely in favour with *habitués*. He is a clever executant, and despite his youthful tendency to hasten *tempi* in concerted works, is already a sound, reliable artist.

ORATORIO has been well to the fore of late. With choral societies the shortest month of the year is frequently the busiest. At the Albert Hall on the 4th, Mackenzie’s *Rose of Sharon* suffered slightly from untoward conditions: it had hardly been vouchsafed adequate preparation, thanks to an overweening confidence in themselves on the part of Mr. Barnby’s forces, rather than lack of energy or zeal on the conductor’s side. The new “cast,” moreover, failed to impress favourably, save in the case of Miss Hilda Wilson and Mr. Watkin Mills. But all this notwithstanding, the work again won universal approval, and proved another step towards the popularity which is unquestionably in store for it. A repetition of the *Messiah* on Ash Wednesday drew a large assemblage to the Albert Hall. The Sacred Harmonic Society having scored a genuine success by the production of Berlioz’s *L’Enfance du Christ* at its previous Concert, deserved well again by the revival of Handel’s long-neglected oratorio, *Belshazzar*, in commemoration of the bi-centenary of the great Saxon composer. The latter performance, however, took place too late in the month to permit of present notice. Another of Handel’s seldom-heard oratorios, *Saul*, was performed at St. James’s Hall, on the 21st, by the capable body of *dilettanti* which bears the master’s name. The event had its interest for many, but criticism upon a strictly amateur effort is not called for.

Two noteworthy Concerts which took place in the course of the past month must not be allowed to pass without a word of notice. The performance of orchestral works by Liszt, given in St. James’s Hall on the 5th by that most ardent and devoted of disciples, Mr. Walter Bache, will not be readily forgotten by those whose sense of duty or anticipation of unalloyed joy induced them to be present. The scheme constituted a feast of strange and wonderful things—a carefully-chosen selection of works exhibiting Liszt’s peculiar method in its most uncompromising form. Standing conspicuously forth from the rest was the symphony to Dante’s *Divina Commedia*, wherein the prophet of Weimar shows us to what dizzy heights it is possible to elevate the art of musical travesty—in other words, with what avalanches of noisy, ugly, and ear-torturing sound it is possible to desecrate one of the sublimest poems man has written. By their applause it seemed that Mr. Bache’s friends found delight in the long, tedious, fatiguing performance. They were welcome to such a treat. The other Concert referred to was that of the Bach Choir, on Feb. 19, when Mr. Hubert Parry’s Scenes from Shelley’s *Prometheus Unbound* were heard for the first time in London.

Here, again, is an example of ambition to illustrate by musical aid one of the most beautiful and profound of poetic conceptions. Is Mr. Parry more successful than Liszt? We fear not. Like his prototype he attempts the all but impossible, and flounders, far out of his depth, amid a sea of meaningless phrases and discordant combinations. How pitiful that talent so palpable as that of our estimable countryman should be wasted on the unsatisfying and the unprofitable!

HERR FRANKE’s announcements for the coming season include thirteen Richter Concerts, of which eight will be given weekly in St. James’s Hall, beginning May 4. The remaining five are to take place in as many of our northern towns. Three Concerts by the “Heckmann Quartet” are also promised. We welcome them, because amateurs in London have, for a long time, been practically limited to two quartets—that at the “Pops,” and another presided over by Mr. H. Holmes. Concerning German opera, Herr Franke speaks very cautiously indeed. The child with burnt fingers undertakes to touch the hot poker again, only on condition of being guaranteed against fresh burns. We hope Herr Franke will obtain his guarantee. As he produces it, there is much in German opera to admire and be thankful for; as to the rest—well, at any rate it accentuates what should be avoided.

THE recent death, in New York, of Dr. Leopold Damrosch is much to be regretted by all who wish well to the cause of music in the “Greater Britain” across the Atlantic. Born and bred in Germany, the deceased musician many years ago accepted an invitation to make America the scene of his labours. He soon entered upon a successful career, and at the time of his death was second only to Theodore Thomas among professors in the United States. Dr. Damrosch combined great industry with a highly sensitive temperament, which sometimes, in his capacity as a *chef d’orchestre*, he found incompatible with necessary coolness and presence of mind. Hence he cannot be said to have ranked among the very few heaven-born conductors. But, to some extent, he made up for certain natural disqualifications by indomitable perseverance and that great gift of enthusiasm which is to other gifts, in such a case, what charity is to the rest of the virtues. Most likely Dr. Damrosch fell a victim to overwork. A hard labourer all his life, and with many responsibilities resting upon him, he undertook the heavy task of directing a season of German opera in New York; in the first instance, travelling to Europe to engage the performers. The season, which could scarcely have ended at his death, proved most successful, and arrangements pointed to a resumption of the performances next winter. But the burden was greater than Dr. Damrosch could bear. He had been for some years conductor of the Oratorio Society of New York, and otherwise filled a large space in the musical field of that city. Two sons of the departed musician are in the musical profession, one being organist of Mr. Ward Beecher’s church; the other, organist of the Episcopal Cathedral, Denver, Colorado.

THERE is reason to believe that some American journals—notably the *New York Herald*—keep a “funny man,” who is sent about at discretion over a wide field of matter, ranging from a coroner’s inquest to a religious conference. Sometimes he is told off for the Opera. He went there on the occasion of Colonel Mapleson’s latest “benefit” in the Empire City. The result appeared next morning.

He began with genial "chaff." New Yorkers, intimated the "funny man," are familiar with Colonel Mapleson's part on a benefit night. No other audience understands him so well. "There are several things the Colonel can't do. . . . But what the Colonel knows how to do, and do well, is to arrange a lucrative benefit for himself. . . . It may be true that the Academy would have been crowded last night had the Colonel advertised himself alone. But on his benefit night the Colonel never runs risks. Besides his own appearance, he also billed Patti and Scalchi in *Semiramide*." Of course the manager made a speech, and ahen this the funny man made good use of the American citizenship Colonel Mapleson had just before pleaded in a law court. The Colonel's voice does not rival either Patti's or Scalchi's. Nobody wanted to "open" him like a piano, nor did anybody believe that he had spared himself either dinner or breakfast. But it is a fine organ nevertheless—a baritone of respectable compass and of pleasing quality. He left his sword behind the flies, among the stage properties, and appeared in what the circulars of the State Department term the full dress suit of a simple American citizen, without weapons or other military trappings. This was in compliment to his adopted country. It was not deemed an obligation, however, to discard the title as well as the uniform of colonel, the naturalization not being yet completed. Accordingly, even the tickets were inscribed with that reminder of the bloody institutions of the Old World. But it is understood that Colonel Mapleson will lay it aside when the time comes for him again to forswear allegiance to Her Majesty in taking out his "final papers." Notwithstanding the occasional existence of colonels in this land of liberty, particularly in the Southern and Western parts thereof, he will utterly sacrifice the title in token of the thoroughness of his renunciation of European despotism—repudiating even its nomenclature. "At the close," we are told, "the Colonel was presented with a floral wreath and a green lyre. Some of the audience thought it was a harp sent by a Hibernian admirer in congratulation for renouncing British allegiance. But that was a mistake."

OPERA, as an entertainment, is no whit more remunerative to its providers in Paris than in London, although the theatre devoted to it in the former city is liberally subventioned by the French Government, whilst London *impresarii*, or their financial backers, are entirely unassisted by the Royal Exchequer in their endeavours to supply an indisputable public want. As a matter of fact, the budget of the Parisian Grand Opera House is no less chronically afflicted by deficits than that of the Republic by which it is subsidised; and yet this splendid establishment, ranking as a national institution, does but little to fulfil its appointed mission in comparison with what is done by the Opera Houses of Vienna, Berlin, and Munich. Let us take the Hofoper of Vienna, for instance (the State subvention of which is less, by several thousands of pounds, than that of the Grand Opéra in Paris), and set down its achievements during a twelvemonth side by side with those of its Parisian rival. In the course of the year 1883 the Hofoper gave 350 performances of 73 operas, five of which were new works, produced with great splendour and completeness; and of 17 ballets, including two absolute novelties; while the Grand Opéra gave 192 performances of 14 operas, one only of which was new; and of five ballets, including one absolute novelty. The *personnel*, all told, of the Hofoper was 711 in number; that of the Grand Opéra, 649. And yet the expenses of the Viennese

establishment—employing 62 artists more than that of Paris—were less by over £60,000 than the outlay incurred by the management of the Grand Opéra. These figures tell a tale of enterprise combined with thrift and intelligent administration on the one hand, and of the converse of those characteristics on the other. Excessive Conservatism and reckless extravagance have brought the great Parisian house almost to its last legs; whereas the Hofoper, with lower prices, a larger company to pay, and a *répertoire* five times as numerous as that of the Grand Opéra, is not only solvent, but flourishes like a green bay tree. The same may be said with equal truth of the Court Theatres in Berlin and Munich, which are scarcely less active, enterprising, or prosperous than the Wiener Hofoper. It is quite obvious that, as far as national institutions for the production of lyric dramas are concerned, Sterne's time-honoured aphorism is applicable to Germany rather than to France. As for England—to her shame be it spoken—she has not a national opera-house to her name, and her capital, with its four millions of inhabitants, is apparently unable to give sufficient support to an operatic *impresa*, for two months of the annual twelve, to keep an undertaking of that class out of the Bankruptcy Court.

"DIE ZWILLINGE" (The Twins), a three-act operetta, by Genée and Roth, produced at the Theater an der Wien on the 14th ult., with an excellent cast and all imaginable splendour of scenery, decorations, and costumes, did not even score a *succès d'estime*. A well-known English musical amateur, who attended the first performance, writes to us to the effect that the music of this work—from which so much had been expected by the public of the Kaiserstadt—is altogether lacking in originality, and consists chiefly of diluted and warmed-up *motifs*, appropriated from old operettas by Offenbach and Lecocq. Oddly enough, the most successful number sung at the *première*, according to our informant, was a chorus reproducing note for note the strains of that convivial ditty, "We won't go home till morning," better known to continental populations as "Marlbrouk s'en va-t-en guerre, mironton, mironton, mirontaine." "The plot," continues our correspondent, Mr. Eugene Lavino, "is a clumsy plagiarism of *Giroflé-Giroflé*; the dresses are borrowed from *La Fille de Mâme Angot*; the *ensemble* is so curiously tiresome that the audience yawned before the end of the first act." According to the critics of the *Presse* and *Tagblatt*, *Die Zwillinge* fell "as flat as a leaden dump," despite the heroic efforts of those inimitable comic artists Girardi, Blasel, and Fries to impart some of their own buoyancy and *verve* to its weak music, dull dialogue, and stale situations. Fraeulein Collin's performance of the "title rôle" (a double part, of course) is spoken of as extraordinarily clever. Doubtless it was so, for this gifted young lady is the ablest singing soubrette on the German stage at the present time, and fully merits the exceptional favour with which she is regarded by the Austrian public. Even she, however, could not make *The Twins* a success; and it is by no means probable that a work which has utterly fallen through at Vienna will find its way to this metropolis.

MR. CARL ROSA will produce Mr. Goring Thomas's new opera during the second week of his season, and *Manon* the week following. Energetic as ever, he has in contemplation to treat for the opera upon which M. Massené is now engaged, founded upon the story of the *Cid*.

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The EDITOR cannot undertake to return articles of which he is unable to make use.

All business letters should be addressed to the PUBLISHERS.

Advertisements should reach the Office not later than the 20th in order to insure insertion in the issue of the month current.



THE LUTE.

LONDON, MONDAY, MARCH 2, 1885.

CHARLOTTE H. SAINTON-DOLBY.

THE death of Madame Sainton-Dolby is an event which early throws a gloom over the musical year. Although the eminent artist retired from the concert platform as long ago as 1870, she may be said to have remained till the end before the public, at whose hands she ever deserved, and always received, the highest favour. Mdme. Sainton was an earnest worker. During her career as a vocalist she could never be charged with idleness. In season, and sometimes, as regards herself, out of season, she laboured on, taking as much delight in her vocation as music-lovers found in her singing. From the concert-hall to the class-room was, with her, a natural step. No believer in the idea of *otium cum dignitate*, she took only the rest said to be found in change of work. The deceased lady's devotion to the Academy she so successfully carried on appears wonderful to those acquainted with its true character. She was in it body and soul. For it labour was a delight, and her thoughts, during the illness which she did not suspect to be fatal, were busy with schemes involving further effort. But the Academy was not the full measure of her activity. Even within the last few months—though the coming event must have been casting its black shadow before—Mdme. Sainton composed a Cantata, which is said to be a really excellent work. Of this, however, the public will judge for themselves when it has been published, and performed in *memoriam*. I would here indicate it only as proof of her indomitable energy—of that true achieving spirit which counts nothing done while anything remains to do. On her death-bed she found delight in reading the proof sheets of her "Swan's Song," and in anticipating the performance she was never to hear. The busy hand and busier brain are now still. Rest has come at last, and the

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BIS

oprano.

Alto.

Tenor.

Bass.

gan.

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opranio.

alto.

Tenor.

Bass.

1. *migh - - - ty; Oh most mer - ci - ful! Oh most*

migh - - - ty; Oh most mer - ci - ful! Oh most

migh - - - ty; Oh most mer - ci - ful!

migh - - - ty; Oh most mer - ci - ful! Oh

boun - ti - ful Oh most mer - ci - ful most boun - ti - ful God.

boun - ti - ful Oh most mer - ci - ful most boun - ti - ful God.

Oh most boun - ti - ful boun - ti - ful God most

most boun - ti - ful God most boun - ti - ful God.

Most mer_ci ful! Most boun_ti ful God the
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 Father Al_migh_ty By the Re_deemer's
 Father Al_migh_ty By the Re_

Sweet in - ter - ces - sion Hear us, help us... when we
 Sweet in - ter - ces - sion Hear us, help... us when
 Sweet in - ter - ces - sion Hear... us, help us when we
 - deemer's Sweet in - ter - ces - sion Hear us, help us

cry. By the Re - deem - er's Sweet in - ter - ces - sion
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 call when we cry. By the Re - deem - er's Sweet in - ter -
 when we cry. By the Re - deem - er's Sweet in - ter -

Hear us help... us... help us when we cry... when we
 ces - - sion Help us... help us when we cry... when we
 ces - - sion Help... us... help us when we cry... when we
 ces - - sion Help us... help us when we cry when we

cry By the Re - deem - er's sweet in - ter - ces - sion
 cry By the Re - deem - er's sweet in - ter - ces - sion
 cry By the Re - deem - er's sweet in - ter - ces - sion
 cry By the Re - deem - er's sweet in - ter - ces - sion

rall.

Hear us help us.... when we cry.... when we
 Hear us help us when we cry when we cry....
 Hear us help us when we cry.... when we
 Hear us help us when we cry.... when we
 Hear us help us when we cry.... when we

cry Oh most mer - ci - ful Oh most boun - ti - ful
 ... Oh most mer - ci - ful Oh most boun - ti - ful
 cry Oh most mer - ci - ful Oh most boun - ti - ful
 cry Oh - most mer - ci - ful Oh most boun - ti - ful

God the Fa - ther Al - migh - - ty God the
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 ff *ff* *p* *p*
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 - ty Al - migh - - ty By the Re - deem - er's
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ff *d.* *p* *p*

sweet in - ter - ces - sion Hear us.... help us when we cry

deem - - er's in - ter - ces sion... help us when we cry

pp *rall:*
By the Re - deem - er's sweet in - ter - ces - - sion.

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pp *rall:*
By the Re - deem - er's sweet in - - ter - ces - - sion.

labours of near upon half-a-century are ended. *Requiescat in pace.* Amateurs, who have reached the years of middle life, will say "Amen to that sweet prayer," with unaffected earnestness, looking back upon the long period through which Madame Sainton-Dolby ranked high among English favourites in a peculiarly English field. They recall her triumphs in Oratorio—triumphs ever associated with a simple dignity of manner that sat well upon so serious an artist. They bear in mind too the fashion in which she lifted the plainest ballad from its modest musical place, and made it shine aloft in the light radiating from her own feeling and expressive power. Memory and gratitude must be exercised together with reference to the departed artist. She deserved much; in her life she enjoyed much—"honour, love, obedience, troops of friends"—and now that she is dead let it be hoped that the influence of her example, as one who adorned her profession, will continue testifying to her life. All sympathies go out to the bereaved husband, with whom, for twenty-five years, Madame Sainton enjoyed the priceless blessing of perfect union. In the great shadow that has fallen upon Prosper Sainton he will hear the voice of universal sympathy and feel the supporting hand of every one who has learned to "weep with those who weep."

JOSEPH BENNETT.

FAMOUS FIRST NIGHTS.

I.—THE "BEGGAR'S OPERA."

Of the first representation of the *Beggar's Opera* no very detailed account has been preserved; and perhaps the main facts in connection with it are already generally known. Everyone, too, who takes interest in such matters must have heard that the piece is supposed to have been written as a satire on the Italian Opera as established by Handel at the King's Theatre in the Haymarket—on the site now occupied by the building known as Her Majesty's Theatre. The forms, however, of Italian Opera are nowhere in Gay's work burlesqued, parodied, or in any way imitated; and in spite of Dr. Johnson's positive assertion that the play was written in ridicule of the "musical Italian drama" it may well be that the author had no intention but to produce a comedy interspersed and enlivened with popular songs.

The original idea of the *Beggar's Opera* seems to have belonged to Swift, who said one day to Gay: "What an odd, pretty sort of thing a Newgate pastoral might make." Gay, as Spence has related the story on Pope's authority and in Pope's own words, "was inclined to try at such a thing for some time, but afterwards thought it would be better to write a comedy on the same plan. This was what gave rise to the *Beggar's Opera*."

When Gay had written a portion of the work he showed it to Swift, who, displeased perhaps at his suggestion not having been adopted in the form in which he had made it, did not approve of what had been done. As he went on with it, Gay submitted his manuscript both to Swift and to Pope, who now and

then gave a correction or a word or two of advice "But it was wholly," says Spence, on Pope's authority, "of his writing." When it was done, neither of Gay's counsellors thought it would succeed, and they showed it to Congreve, who, after reading it over, said it would "either take greatly or be damned confoundedly." This oracular saying, from the wittiest of our comic dramatists, was scarcely worthy of him. It really meant little more than that the piece would either fail or succeed.

Pope and Swift and all Gay's intimate friends were present at the first representation; and very uncertain as to how the piece would be received, were much encouraged by hearing the Duke of Argyll, who sat in the next box, say aloud: "It will do—it must do; I see it in the eyes of them." This was long before the first act came to an end, and, says Pope, as cited by Spence, "this gave us ease, for that duke (besides his own good taste) has a particular knack as anyone now living in discovering the taste of the public. He was quite right in this as usual; the good nature of the audience grew stronger and stronger every act, and ended in a clamour of applause."

In the notes to the *Dunciad* we read—"The piece was received with greater applause than was ever known. Besides being acted in London sixty-three days without interruption, and renewed next season with equal applause, it spread to all the great towns of England; was played in many places to the thirtieth and fortieth time; at Bath and Bristol, fifty. It made its progress into Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, where it was performed twenty-four days successively. The ladies carried about with them the favourite songs of it in fans, and houses were furnished with it in screens. The fame of it was not confined to the author only. The person who acted Polly, till then obscure, became all at once the favourite of the town; her pictures were engraved and sold in great numbers, her life written, books of letters and verses to her published, and pamphlets made even of her sayings and jests. Furthermore, it drove out of England (for that season) the Italian opera, which had carried all before it for ten years."

The *Beggar's Opera*, like many other works which were destined to obtain enormous success, did not please the first manager to whom it was submitted. It was originally offered to Cibber, at Drury Lane, who rejected it. It was afterwards accepted by Rich, the manager of the Theatre Royal in Lincoln's Inn Fields, who produced it the 29th of January, 1727-8. It was wittily said—or "ludicrously," as Dr. Johnson put it—that the success of the piece "made Gay rich and Rich gay." Two years after its first production it was still the rage of the town; and so many ballad operas in imitation of it were brought out, that for several years afterwards scarcely other kind of drama was represented. "Even for the booths in Bartholomew Fair," says Mr. William Chappell in his "Popular Music of the Olden Time," "ballad operas were written and subsequently published with the

tunes. In many the music was printed in type with the book; for others it was engraved and sold separately." The success of the *Beggar's Opera* was looked upon as a national triumph; and it was celebrated with patriotic fervour in many a ballad of the day. A poem published in 1730 on the success of the *Beggar's Opera*, and entitled "Old England's Garland, or the Italian Opera's Downfall," begins as follows:—

"I sing of sad discords that happened of late,
Of strange revolutions but not in the State;
How old England grew fond of old tunes of her own
And her ballads went up and our operas down.
Derry down, down, hey, derry down."

It is thus referred to the epilogue to "Love in a Riddle."

"Poor English mouths for twenty years
Have been shut up from music;
But, thank our stars, outlandish airs
At last have made you all sick.
Where warbling dames were all in flames
And for precedence wrangled,
One English play cut short the fray
And home again they dangled.

"Sweet sound on languid sense bestowed
Is like a beauty married
To the empty fop, who talks aloud,
And all her charms are buried.
But late experience plainly shows
That common sense and a ditty
Have ravished all the belles and beaus,
And charmed the chaunting city."

That the *Beggar's Opera* had the effect of destroying in England, at least, for a time, the taste for Italian opera is an assertion frequently made, but which could scarcely be proved. In the year 1828, the year of the *Beggar's Opera*, Italian Opera did indeed come to grief in London. It failed simply because the fifty thousand pounds subscribed for its maintenance eight years before had now been spent. In 1720 Handel established at the King's Theatre the so-called Royal Academy of Music —on the basis of a pecuniary subvention from a number of distinguished amateurs who among them had raised, with a view to the permanent maintenance of Italian Opera in England, a sum of fifty thousand pounds. This liberal grant placed without reserve at Handel's disposal, enabled him to carry on the theatre for seven years, but no longer. Accordingly, in 1828, he had nothing to depend upon in the way of money, but the ordinary receipts of the theatre; and though these may have been, and doubtless were, diminished by the attractions of the *Beggar's Opera* we may be quite sure that the Royal Academy of Music would not in that year have been closed, but for the fact that the reserve fund of fifty thousand pounds had now been spent. The failure was attributed by some to the disputes as to the merits of Handel and Buononcini, the composers, and of Faustina and Cuzzoni, the singers; though the natural effect of such contests must have been to keep up an interest in the performances. Probably the numbers were but few in London of those who really cared for Italian music; and

however that may have been, it has already been said that the money out of which the losses of previous seasons had been made good, had now been exhausted.

The *Beggar's Opera*, however, was in some measure, responsible for the collapse; and many of the writers of the time approve or bewail the influence of that work according as they like or dislike Italian opera. Dr. Arbuthnot, one of the few literary men of the day who seems really to have appreciated good music, wrote as follows in the *London Journal*, under the date of March 22nd, 1728, as to the effect on the fortunes of Italian opera of the striking success achieved by the *Beggar's Opera*. "As there is there is nothing which surprises all true lovers of music more than the neglect into which the Italian operas are at present falling, so I cannot but think it a very extraordinary instance of the fickle and inconstant temper of the English nation, a failing which they have always been endeavouring to cast upon their neighbours in France, but to which they themselves have just as good a title, as will appear to anyone who will take the trouble to consult our historians." After adopting Italian opera with eagerness, we began, he says, as soon as we had obtained it in perfection, to make it a pretext for disputes instead of enjoying it; and he concludes that it was supported among us for a time, not from genuine liking, but simply from fashion. The *Beggar's Opera*, then, just produced, was, he says, "a touchstone to try British taste on;" and he adds that it has "proved effective in discovering our true inclinations, which, however artfully they may have been disguised for a while, will, one time or another, start up and disclose themselves. *Æsop's* story of the cat who, at the petition of her lover, was changed into a fine woman, is pretty well known, notwithstanding which alteration we find that upon the appearance of a mouse she could not resist the temptation of springing out of her husband's arms to pursue it, though it was on the very wedding night. Our English audiences have been for some time returning to their cattish nature, of which some particular sounds from the gallery have given us sufficient warning. And since they have so openly declared themselves, I must only desire that they will not think they can put on the fine woman again just when they please, but content themselves with their skill in caterwauling. For my own part, I cannot think it would be any loss to refined lovers of music if all those false friends who have made pretensions to it only in compliance with the fashion would separate themselves from them; provided our Italian operas could be brought under such regulations as to go on without them. In short, my comfort is, that so great a desertion may force us so to contract the expenses of our operas as would put an end to our having them in as great perfection as at present, yet we shall be able at least to hear them without interruption."

Probably no one profited so much by the success of the *Beggar's Opera* as the charming Lavinia Fenton, curiously described by Pope as "the person who acted Polly," but who, he adds, became all at

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once "the favourite of the town." She ended her brief and brilliant career by marrying the Duke of Bolton. Not, however, all at once. "The Duke of Bolton," says Swift in one of his letters, "has run away with Polly Peachum, having settled four hundred a year on her during pleasure, and upon disagreement two hundred more." The disagreement anticipated, at least as a possibility, never took place. Twenty-three years after the elopement the Duke's wife died, and Lavinia Fenton became Duchess of Bolton. She was, according to the account given of her by Dr. Joseph Wharton, "a very accomplished and most agreeable companion; had much wit, good strong sense, and a just taste in polite literature. Her person was agreeable and well made," continues Dr. Wharton, "though, I think, she never could be called a beauty. I have had the pleasure of being at table with her, when her conversation was much admired by the first characters of the age, particularly by the old Lord Bathurst and Lord Granville."

Like most works, the *Beggar's Opera* was variously judged by critics, though the public applauded it with one voice. Fifty years after its first production Sir John Fielding, the magistrate, sent letters to the managers of Drury Lane and Covent Garden, advising them not to perform the *Beggar's Opera*, "as it tended to increase the number of thieves." Garrick approved of Sir John's advice, and declared himself determined to follow it—because, as was uncharitably suggested, he had only one good singer in his company. Colman, however, declined to accept the proffered counsel. "Mr. Colman's compliments to Sir John Fielding," he wrote, "and he does not think his the only house in Bow Street where thieves are hardened and encouraged, and will persist in continuing the representation of that admirable satire the *Beggar's Opera*." Swift's friendship for the author carried him so far as to make him praise its morality; for the piece, he said, "placed all kinds of vice in the strongest and most odious light." It was censured, however, on the high authority of Dr. Herring, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, as "giving encouragement, not only to vice, but to crime, by making a highwayman the hero, and dismissing him at last unpunished."

It was said, too, that after the production of the *Beggar's Opera* new gangs of robbers were formed.

In dealing with the two conflicting views put forward as to the moral effect of Gay's amusing piece, Johnson condemns both, and with his usual acuteness, adds: "The play, like many others, was plainly written only to divert, without any moral purpose, and is therefore not likely to do good; nor can it be conceived, without more speculation than life requires or admits, to be productive of much evil. Highwaymen and housebreakers seldom frequent the playhouse or mingle in any elegant diversion; nor is it possible for anyone to imagine that he may rob with safety because he sees Mackheath reprieved upon the stage."

SUTHERLAND EDWARDS.

UNDER the title of "The Pianist's Hand," Professor Hans Schmitt, of Vienna, has compiled an interesting pamphlet dealing with the respective shapes and special capacities of great pianoforte player's hands, and illustrated by outline drawings. The differences between the "bundles of fives" with which renowned performers on the clavichord have delighted and still delight the musical world are happily hit off by the eminent P.F. teacher, who describes Liszt's "giant hand" as a physical marvel that can play the piano "round the corner," and says of Rubinstein: "He has paws, leonine in shape and strength; when he strikes the keys with them *fortissimo*, he makes the Antipodeans jump with amazement." Sophie Menter's hands are "essentially manly;" whilst some of the most skilful male pianists (the lamented Tausig in particular) have swept the keys with tiny feminine hands. How Jaell and Joseffy with their "little fat fingers" can conjure up such legions of tone sprites from the key-board is a mystery to the author, himself one of the most expert pianists of the day. He has much that is interesting to say of his two wonderful pupils, little Pruewer, who transposes the most difficult fugues and preludes of Bach at sight (the child is only eight years old, and has been pronounced "the wonder of the world" by Liszt and Rubinstein alike) and the "ex-seven year-old" marvel, Ilona Eibenschuetz, whose triumphs in Russia, Germany and Denmark have been recorded in every musical journal of the Continent. Another of Professor Schmitt's juvenile *alumni* named Janko, has invented a key-board equalising the difficulties and facilities of all the musical keys and simplifying execution (*technique*) to such an extent that, for instance, Chopin's well-known D flat waltz, surnamed "The Minute Waltz" because intended by its composer to be performed in exactly sixty seconds, can easily be played upon the "Janko-Klavier" in forty seconds.

A good story is told apropos of this famous waltz. The jury for musical instruments at the first Paris Exhibition was called upon to award medals to the best pianofortes exhibited, and hired a first-class pianist to test the instruments in the presence of the jurors. Three hundred pianofortes had been sent in, and it was decided that, in fairness to the makers, the same piece should be played upon each one of them. Not unnaturally the "Minute Waltz" suggested itself as the most eligible morséau for this purpose, being at once brilliant and brief. Even admitting that the pianist should perform it three hundred times running at the prescribed maximum of speed, the trial would last five hours, making no allowance for the time required by the performer to shift his seat from one instrument to another. However, due regard having been observed, in the choice of the executant, to muscular development and constitutional vigour, the jury assembled in the P.F. department and "turned on" their brawny "mud-dobber." He got through the waltz successfully sixty times, in a little over the first hour, with the mechanical regularity of a barrel-organ. During the following hour he exhibited symptoms of fatigue. By the time he had played the waltz one hundred and fifty times in succession his fingers became stiffened with cramp, and he could no longer sit erect. The jury reproached him with yielding to unmanly weakness, but was compelled, in view of his exhausted condition, to grant him half-an-hour's respite, during which time his wrists and finger-joints were industriously anointed with aromatic unguents, and costly stimulants were administered to him internally. Thus

solaced and reinvigorated, he resumed his task. Five-and-twenty times more did the unfortunate executant struggle through the test-waltz with anguish and loathing, each time more and more limply; until at last his paralysed hands sunk powerless into his lap. For the rest of the anecdote Hector Berlioz, who told it at great length and with infinite *verve* in one of his inimitable feuillets, must be held responsible. According to him, a miracle was enacted. The jury would not let their pianist off his contract. He had accepted an engagement to play the D flat waltz three hundred times "on end," and they insisted upon his performing the balance due to them, one hundred and twenty-five more repetitions. So they lifted the luckless one, stool and all, to the next untested piano; when, lo and behold! that instrument began to play the "Minute Waltz" on its own account, setting an example of providential interposition which was punctually followed by the remaining one hundred and twenty-four pianofortes!

RACZ PALI (Paul Racz), the so-called Gipsy King, whose death is recorded in the *Pesther Lloyd*, was the most popular fiddler and executant of Hungarian national music in the Realm of the Five Rivers. The excellent band of which he had been the leader for nearly three decades was heard four years ago in London, whither he brought it in compliance with the express desire of the Prince of Wales, who presented him, on his departure from England, with a magnificent diamond ring. This ring and his favourite violin he left to his son Paul, who also inherits the leadership of the renowned "Racz Kapelle," in which post he has replaced his father since November 12, 1884, the day on which the old Zigeuner, crippled by rheumatism and weight of years, wielded his bow for the last time. When Racz Pali felt that his end was drawing nigh, he summoned "his people" to take leave of him, and in their presence—as they stood weeping round his bed—dictated his last will and testament to a notary. He had been married four times, and his wives had borne him over half-a-hundred children, thirty-four of whom survive him. Amongst these he equally divided (with the exception of the special legacy above referred to) the handsome fortune he had contrived to amass in the course of his long and prosperous professional career. Next morning the veteran violinist passed away peacefully, and a few days later was carried to his last resting-place with little less than princely honours. Ten thousand persons, amongst them many of the *fine fleur* of Hungarian society, followed his body to the grave. The procession was headed by the full band of the 44th Regiment, and closed by a cohort of gipsy musicians, some hundreds strong, representing all the minstrel brotherhoods of Hungary, Transylvania, and the three Banats, gathered together from every part of the kingdom to do honour to their *doyen*. Before he became an orchestral leader, Racz had served with distinction in the Austrian army for nearly twenty years, attaining the rank of regimental sergeant-major, and earning half-a-dozen crosses and medals, which—as well as his well-beloved fiddle, wreathed in crape—were borne after his coffin on black velvet cushions by non-commissioned officers of his old regiment. Racz's playing, which the writer of these lines has often listened to with indescribable pleasure, was at once fiery and tender, passionate and sentimental. Like so many of the wild people to whom he belonged, the inborn gift of fiddling was his, and he was a shrewd harmonizer to boot. Liszt held him in high esteem as an interpreter of Magyar national

music, and has mentioned him more than once in his writings upon that subject. Some of Racz's arrangements of operatic and dance-music, which he himself thought little of, were extremely clever, quaint and felicitous. In fact he was a musician, heart and soul. Peace to his ashes!

ABDUL HAMID, the actual Commander of the Faithful, is a pianist in a small way, and spends an hour or two every day at the instrument trying over new music, with which he is regularly supplied by the leading publishing firms of Berlin and Vienna, and of which he contrives to pick out the tunes with praiseworthy patience, greatly to his own delectation. It is stated that of late he has taken a great fancy to the compositions of Wagner, which he formerly abhorred. His two sons, Selim and Abdul Medjid, are said to be accomplished performers and sight-readers, as, moreover, is the mother of the former prince, the Padishah's *Khanum*, or principal wife. This august lady received her musical training partly from Mademoiselle Dadian, the interpreter of the Imperial Harem, and partly from her husband, who used to give her pianoforte lessons during his uncle's reign, when he was merely a Prince *comme un autre*, his eldest brother Murad being at that time Heir Apparent. She is a daughter of the late Sultan Abdul Aziz, who gave her an excellent education. It was through the circumstance that her cousin Abdul Hamid taught her riding that she fell in love with him, and he with her; and their union has been, considering all things, an unusually happy one. The Sultan spends a portion of every evening with this accomplished lady, chiefly in playing pianoforte duets with her. He has recently composed a concerted piece for his private band, and has dedicated it to his favourite Sultana.

FROM THE PROVINCES.

ABERDARE.—The next National Eisteddfod is fixed to be held in this town in August next. The local Committee has had numerous sittings, and various portions of the programme have been definitely arranged. It is estimated that the expenditure will be as follows:—Prizes, £600; expenses of concerts, £600; printing and advertising, £300; pavilion, £900; secretary's salary and commission, £200; adjudicators' fees, £150; sundries, £200; total £2,950. The promoters calculate that the attendance on the first day should number 4,000 persons; second day, 12,000; third day, 8,000; fourth day, 4,000; total, 22,000. This would produce at 2s. per head, £2,200; and the subscriptions would amount to about £750. At a recent meeting of the Committee, Lord Aberdare, president, said it seemed to him that one of the great objects of the Eisteddfod was to encourage music, and the weak point in the state of Welsh music was the want of a general knowledge of instrumental music. They should, he thought, give more encouragement in that direction, and the competitions ought to be limited to the natives of Wales, for the reason that if at present they were led to hear good instrumental music, they had to go to England. Welsh people were very strong in vocal music, unusually strong; but, on the whole, they were equally weak in instrumental music. Referring to fife and drum competitions, his lordship said such bands were a plague in any district. What they wanted was really good works. The playing of fifes and drums did nothing to further a real musical knowledge, and promote the real talent of the country. A member of the Committee observed that in

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order to improve the fife and drum bands they had selected a fantasia from Wallace's *Maritana*, to which his lordship tartly rejoined that such bands ought to be improved off the face of the earth. He continued that it was nothing but dreadful discord. They often praised their musical talents, which were in fact distinguishable in their psalms and hymns. He was sure there was latent talent in Welshmen, and it was only to be drawn out. They should encourage real music. In Germany, and even in France, they found bodies of men playing all the very best instruments that were capable of performing the very highest composition of the greatest composers, but in that respect the Welsh people were miserably deficient. Now that they were taking up the Eisteddfod, and the encouragement of music, they ought to do so in a really sound and successful manner. It was afterwards agreed that all compositions should be restricted to inhabitants of Wales and Monmouthshire, and natives of Wales and their children.

BIRMINGHAM.—Coming on the last day of January, Dr. Heap's excellent Chamber Concert, the second of the current series, perforce could not be mentioned in my despatch for last month's issue. It being impossible to allude to each of the items of the interesting scheme submitted by Dr. Heap for his—we are glad to note—increasing *clientèle*, I must dismiss all but one—the Dvorák contribution—with the bare recital of the names, which are now appended. These were—Trio in C minor, op. 66—piano and strings (Mendelssohn); Duo in G—violin and viola (Mozart); Sonata in F, op. 57—piano and violin (Dvorák); Chaconne in D minor—violin (Bach); Piano solo, Momento capricioso in B, flat, op. 12 (Weber) Nocturne in G. flat, op. 13, Etude, "Si oiseau j'étais," in F. sharp (Henselt); Quartet in G minor, op. 4, No. 2—strings (Spohr). The executants were identical with the cast for the previous Concert, viz. Mr. Carrodus and Mr. Speelman, violins; Herr Bernhardt, viola; and M. Vieuxtemps, violoncello. I am quite unable to settle the exact date of the Sonata for violin and piano by the illustrious Czech musician, but, from the fact that the opus number being the one immediately preceding that of the *Stabat Mater*, I am inclined to believe the sonata might be assigned to that portion of Dvorák's chequered career, when the sun of prosperity did not shine on him. It is formulated in three movements, allegro, adagio and rondo, the first is in real sonata form, the second travels rather out of conventional grooves, and the third is for thematic and episodal treatment, a remarkable section. How from the slightest material Dvorák can evolve and build up a substantial edifice, can be gleaned from the treatment of the allegro. The themes are simplicity itself, their harmonical treatment, in a word, is masterly. As to the adagio, interpreted by the deft manipulation of Mr. Carrodus, this seemed like "a living poem." The rondo is based on a motif in dance rhythm, but its lightness is at times counterbalanced by beautiful episodes where tonality and rhythm change as if under the wand of a magician. A single hearing is manifestly inadequate to render full justice to the Sonata, and as just now Dvorák is high in favour here, Dr. Heap may possibly give a repetition of the piece ere his season closes. It would be extremely ungracious to pass over the capital rendering of the Sonata, and musical dual responsibility never sat more happily than it did on this occasion on the shoulders of the exponents, Mr. Carrodus and Dr. Heap.—Mr. Stockley's Orchestral Concert audience, I am delighted to say upon unimpeachable authority, was the largest he has ever played to since the institution of the series, now over

a dozen years ago. The labours of Mr. Stockley in this have really been co-incident with the establishment of a permanent orchestra here—a work of pre-eminently slow growth. I will add but one fact—and one that is quite significant enough to emphasize the value of his labours—that is, that his programme for the 7th was rendered by an orchestra of upwards of eighty, the rank and file of which, with four exceptions, viz., the 'cello and bass, Mr. Ould and Mr. Reynolds, first oboe and first bassoon, MM. Horton and Trout, were in very truth resident professors. Mr. Carrodus, who listened to all the pieces except the Saint-Saëns, told me that the band was not only a credit to the town, but he believed few, if any, towns in England or Ireland could show such a permanent orchestra of home material. Mr. Stockley's scheme presents to the reviewer quite an embarrassment of riches, so much so, that one hardly knows where to begin, and, having once started, where to leave off. However, as a symphony is the "correct card" for orchestral business, it is, all things considered, the best course to give the *pas* to Raff's Italian suite which he calls "Im Suden." I believe I am right in saying it was discovered among his MSS. just after his death, and that it dates between the symphonies "Im Walde" and "Lenore." It first saw the light in its complete form at a Concert in Berlin in November, 1883. Parts of it have been heard at the Crystal Palace, and I think it has been included once in one of the programmes of the Promenades. So far as provincials are concerned it was to us an unopened book, and certainly the perusal gave content. It comprises in all five movements,—overture, barcarolle, intermezzo, notturno and finale tarantella. The first of this quartet is showy and brilliant in texture, but not remarkable for depth of thought; the barcarolle is something more than pretty, and it is certainly scored with ingenuity. Thoroughly suggestive of Carnival time is the intermezzo, which the author has christened "Pulchinella." The gem of the work is the nottarro, and its singular grace and unstudied beauty make up amply for errors of commission and faults of omission, which a hearer, without being too hypercritical, could detect in the formulation of the suite. The poem symphonique by Saint-Saëns, called "Le rouet à Omphale," is clever and no more. It professes to detail musically the story of the conquest of Hercules by the Circe who lured him to lay down the weapons of manhood, and take up the distaff. I do not propose to journey a single yard towards the battlefield of art polemics involved in Saint-Saëns' thesis. I would only say that if I am quite heterodox on the possibility of the soundness of any such kindred thesis, it will take something more than Saint-Saëns' carpentry to bring me into the paths of orthodoxy. Of course, his tether is so wide that it must not be an occasion for surprise to find at times "He is a law unto himself." His finish of the last movement is quite characteristic of the man. It is the dominant of the key, given by second violins and followed by the firsts, with a harmonic. Mr. Carrodus played grandly Spohr's dramatic concerto, and Ernst's Rondo Papageno. The vocalists were Miss Clara Samuell and Mr. Joseph Maas. The soprano gave with unimpeachable taste, "Non piu Mesta," a waltz aria from *Mirella*, and "Farewell," by F. E. Bache. Mr. Maas, fresh from his Belgium triumphs, was in magnificent voice: "Salve d'amore" was charmingly rendered, and "Dalla sua pace," an example of aria singing not often experienced. Apollo's invocation, written for Mr. Maas by M. Massené for the last Norwich festival, was given by the artist with marvellous breadth of tone and dramatic force.—

The anticipations I had formed on the part-song, "Lord Ullin's Daughter," which was referred to last month, were completely realised at a private presentation of Mr. Gaul's piece at the annual dinner of the Musical Society on the 11th. Sung by the very pick of an organization, at whose head-quarters on alternate Tuesday's one can hear some of the best glee singing to be met with for miles, "Lord Ullin's Daughter" was a complete success. On the 7th of March it will be publicly given at the Town Hall by the male voice choir of Saltley College, numbering 100 voices, and I hope to be able to say just another word about it in due course.—The Midland Institute Glee and Madrigal Society gave a most enjoyable matinée on February 7th. This organization is the result of a happy thought on the part of Mr. G. H. Johnstone, an amateur whose energy, zeal and sound judgment in matters musical, from "the caucus" of the Festival downwards, it is impossible to over-estimate. I can only mention the rendering of that extremely intricate part-song, "Sir Patrick Spens" to show the mettle of his choir, numbering fifty picked voices, each of whom might be fitly called a soloist. Mr. W. C. Stockley is the conductor.—That large and influential body of amateurs enrolled under the wing of the Clef Club has decided to move from the present *locale* to more commodious premises, and a draft scheme, submitted at the annual meeting on the 13th was adopted. The new premises will be those formerly occupied by the Liberal Association, or, according to the euphonious and polite *Saturday Reviewer*, the late abode of "The Schnadhorstian Nuisance," the caucus.—The Festival choir is hard at work on Dvorák's new work for the August celebration "The Spectre bride," two or three numbers of which have been fairly grappled with.

BROCKLEY.—At a Miscellaneous Concert given at St. Peter's Hall by the choir of St. Peter's Church, on Tuesday, January 27, in aid of the funds for improving the organ, a new setting of the 137 Psalm, "By the waters of Babylon," by the conductor, Dr. C. J. Frost, was produced for the first time. The work comprises an opening chorus "By the waters;" a tenor solo, "For they that led us away," sung by Mr. H. C. Bromley; a soprano and contralto duet, "If I forget thee," effectively sung by Miss Pierpoint and Miss Bocquet; a bass solo, "If I do not remember thee" (Mr. H. C. Thomas); and a quintett, "Remember the children of Edom," beautifully rendered by Miss Russell and the four vocalists already named, and enored; this is perhaps the gem of the work. The finale is a chorus, "Blessed shall He be." The accompaniment is written for piano and harmonium, and thus becomes available in the absence of an orchestra. The work, which took barely half an hour in its performance, was well received by a crowded audience, and the composer at its close had a hearty recall.

CARDIFF.—The Cardiff Musical Association gave Spohr's oratorio, *The Fall of Babylon*, as their fourth Concert, at the Public Hall, Queen's Chambers, on January 22nd. They were assisted by vocalists from various Cathedral choirs, and gave the work a very fair rendering on the whole. The orchestra, with Mr. Carrodus as leader, was one of a very efficient character, and the principal vocalists were: Mrs. Hutchinson, Miss Hilda Wilson, Mr. Redfern Hollins, and Mr. Brereton. The conductor was Mr. Walter Scott.—It is also to be noted that two good Concerts have recently been given at the assembly rooms of the Town Hall for the benefit of the children's ward at the Cardiff Infirmary. Among the vocalists were Mrs. Terry, Miss Edwards, Rev. E. Skrimshire, Rev. W. A. Downing, &c.—In accordance

with a resolution recently passed at a Cardiff meeting of the general public, efforts are now being made by a committee to organise an institution bearing the title of the Cambrian Society of South Wales. The object is to bring the people of the district—musicians, *literati*, &c.—together, and to further all matters concerning Eisteddfodau; also to promote a beneficial social gathering on St. David's Day. Among the promoters are: Archdeacon Griffith, Llandaff; Judge Gwilym Williams, Principal Jones, University College of South Wales, &c.

CARLISLE.—On the 24th January, the fourth of the series of Saturday evening Concerts for the people was given in the Drill Hall. There was a very large audience, and the performances were received with marked appreciation. Madame Shepherd (of the Newcastle-on-Tyne Concerts) sang with taste, her rich, well-cultivated soprano voice showing to much advantage in the songs "She wandered down the mountain side," "Beautiful Roses," and "Children's Home," all of which were enored. Mr. Binns (of Halifax) sang "Love sounds the alarm" and "The Arethusa." The orchestra, under the baton of Mr. Binning, rendered in a praiseworthy manner Bucalossi's "Hunting Scene" and other pieces. Mr. H. Brook's harp solos were much admired. Mr. B. Scott, junr., was, as usual, accompanist.

FINCHLEY.—A performance of Cowen's *Rose Maiden* took place on the 5th inst. The vocalists were Miss Fuselle, Miss Clara Myers, Mr. John Probert and Mr. James Bayne. The choruses were rendered by the Finchley Choral Society under the conductorship of Mr. A. A. Yeatman.

LUTON.—Haydn's *Creation* was given with full band and chorus at the Assembly Rooms on the 2nd inst. The vocalists being Miss Marianne Fenna, Mr. John Probert, &c. Mr. Inwards conducted.

MANCHESTER.—Mr. Charles Hallé has produced more novelties during this season than in any previous one. On February 5th the first part of the Concert was devoted to the closing scene of the first act of *Parsifal*, as arranged by Wagner for concert performance, and the second part to Schumann's *Faust*. Neither of these had been before performed in Manchester. The former was remarkably well performed, but produced a decided sense of weariness. *Faust*, on the contrary, was thoroughly enjoyed.—A splendid performance of Rossini's *Moses in Egypt* was given on January 22nd, and the work of the great Italian composer proved as attractive as when it was first performed a year ago.—At the Concert on January 29th, Madame Norman-Néruda and Herr Strauss played Mozart's duet in G for violin and viola with great effect. It is so seldom duets for these instruments are heard that it was all the more appreciated.—At Mr. de Jong's Concert on January 31st, Miss Eleanor Rees made a very successful first appearance in Manchester. Her beautiful mezzo-soprano voice told remarkably well in the Free Trade Hall, and she sang with much intelligence.—The talented organist of the Manchester Cathedral, Mr. J. K. Pyne, delivered, on January 19th, in the Town Hall, a very interesting lecture on the history of the organ with an account of some eminent composers, and gave some admirable illustrations from their writings.

NOTTINGHAM.—A Choir Contest was held in the Albert Hall of this town, on Saturday, January 31. Five choirs entered the competition, and some really good singing was listened to by the large audience. The judge, Mr. J. Adcock, in awarding the first prize to the "Part Singers" for their rendering of "Daybreak" by Alfred Gaul, Esq. (published in No. 10 of THE LUTE), spoke in high terms

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of the part-song, and of the way in which it was sung, reflecting great credit both upon the choir and their conductor, Mr. J. K. Lees. In the juvenile solo contest which followed, the gold medal was obtained by Miss Nellie Lees, aged 12.

PORTSMOUTH.—On the 3rd inst., the Borough of Portsmouth Philharmonic Society gave a performance of Prout's *Alfred* at the Portland Hall, under the direction of Mr. Picton. The soloists were Miss Bertha Moore, Mr. John Probert and Mr. James Bayne.

REVIEWS.

STANLEY LUCAS, WEBER & CO.

Tarantella in E flat. For the Pianoforte. By Walter Macfarren.

THE skill of the musician is evident throughout this graceful and pleasing Tarantella (the fourth of its kind published by Mr. Macfarren), and in the hands of pianists who have cultivated a refined touch, the piece is certain to prove effective.

The Daddy Longlegs and the Fly. Song. Words by Edward Lear. Music by Emily Josephine Troup.

MR. LEAR'S humorous verses describing the peculiar troubles of Mr. Daddy Longlegs and Mr. Floppy Fly cannot fail to amuse the little folks. The music is pretty and appropriately simple both for voice and piano.

Waltzer. For the Pianoforte. By Florence May.

THESE waltzes, though somewhat lacking in melodic interest, have decided merit; the harmonic progressions are well studied, and show sufficient talent to encourage the young composer to further efforts in her art.

Ring Out, Wild Bells. Words by Alfred Tennyson. Music by Charles Gounod.

THE famous French composer here shows how thoroughly he has caught the spirit which animates our English poet's verses. His music seems to spring naturally from the text; wherefore it is broad of utterance, with a dash of wintry wildness in its style, and yet not deficient in the realism, so rarely, as to music, found allied with genuine poetic feeling. We will not say that M. Gounod has set the Laureate's lines once and for all, but whosoever succeeds him and excels him must be made of no ordinary stuff.

THE LONDON MUSIC PUBLISHING COMPANY.

Bourrée. For the Pianoforte. By J. E. Anderson, Mus. Bac.

THERE is some smooth part writing in this little piece, otherwise it contains no feature worthy of notice.

Fascination. Polka. For the Pianoforte. By J. Welsh-Leith.

A BRIGHT and exhilarating composition with well-contrasted themes containing all the features essential to a good polka.

J. INGLIS AND SONS.

Ruth and Naomi. Sacred Song. Words by the Rev. James Stark. Music by D. Middleton.

THIS song, though containing nothing new, is expressive and well worthy of a place in the musical library of soprano vocalists.

NOVELLO, EWER AND CO.

Only to love thee once again. Song. Words and Music by George H. L. Edwards.

MERIT is easily found here since this song presents both artistic purpose and achievement. Mr. Edwards writes like a musician, and is none the less to be commended for relying on comparatively simple means for the good effect this composition will surely make whenever adequately rendered.

Ten Songs. The poetry by Robert Burns. The music composed by George J. Bennett.

THE highly promising young composer, late of the Royal Academy of Music, and now, thanks to the liberality of Messrs. Novello and Co., completing his education in Germany, has here given renewed proof of the talent that is in him, together with further encouragement to those who hope much from his future. These songs are artistic every one, yet not over-wrought as are so many modern things of the kind. Thus far Mr. Bennett seems unaffected by the exaggerations natural to musical hysteria. He belongs to the present time, it is true, but he never loses sight of the classical models which so many of his contemporaries affect to despise as old-fashioned. May he always be thus minded. Our wish, we feel sure, will find an echo in the heart of every one who makes acquaintance with these charming effusions.

SIR ARTHUR SULLIVAN'S new opera, which is founded upon a Japanese fairy tale, is now under rehearsal.

MR. GEORGE DIXEY has succeeded Mr. Laurence Harris as Secretary of the Music Publishers' Association.

VIERTELJAHRSCHRIFT FÜR MUSIKWISSENSCHAFT is the title of a new musical journal just started by MM. Breitkopf and Härtel. May its existence be as long as its name!

MR. LEWIS THOMAS, the musical critic of the *Daily Telegraph* during Mr. Joseph Bennett's absence in America, has been retained on the staff of that journal, and will now act as Mr. Bennett's colleague.

SAID one provincial singer to another: "My daughter has inherited my voice." "Oh!" said the other with the most innocent air imaginable; "that is the explanation, then. I have always wondered where it was."

SPAIN has an arbitrary musical pitch of her own. By a royal decree of February, 1879, the adoption of the diapason normal (A=870 vibrations to the second) was ordered. The example might well be followed elsewhere.

COLONEL MAPLESON does not resemble Mr. Micawber in one particular—for, instead of "waiting for something to turn up," he is always "turning up" himself. He is now in treaty for Covent Garden Theatre, which temple of art he yearns to rescue from its present desecration and restore to its former greatness. Such buoyant courage, such undimmed devotion to the cause, should not go unrewarded. *Vive Mapleson!* the last hope of Italian opera, the benefactor of Italian artists!

"We have had our attention drawn to a novelty named the 'Miranda Pianista.' Neat and elegant in appearance, the 'Pianista' is an article of furniture ornamental to any room. It is claimed for this invention that even those with no knowledge of music whatever are able to play the piano or other key-board instrument with great accuracy. The 'Pianista' is admirably adapted for dancing parties. This is said to be the first time this invention has been publicly exhibited, and it is well worth seeing, for it is certainly a wonderful piece of mechanism."

POET'S CORNER.

—O—

THE LEGEND-QUEEN.

(Imitated from the Roumanian of Mano Eminescu.)

FLEECY vapours, silvern shining,
From the moon are lightly falling;
Luna drew them from the waters
And returns them to the meadows.

Spider-webs to rend asunder
All the flowers have conspiréd;
On the draperies of midnight
Dewdrop hang, like liquid jewels.

By the lake (o'er which the vapours
Wreathe, in their fantastic shadows
Shimm'ring back the ripple's sparkle
Transient gleams of undulation)

Rustling reeds with light hand parting
Stands a maiden, forward bending;
Softly scatters ruddiest roses
O'er the bright enchanted waters.

Gazes she, and hopes some picture
May flash out from 'mongst the ripples;
(For, in olden times, dark Hertha
Cast her spell upon these waters).

Fain would she with tender rosebuds
Conjure phantoms to the surface,
For she knows full well that Freya
Once lent charms to all the roses.

Gazes she, the golden-haired one,
And her face shines in the moonlight.
In the myst'ry of her blue eyes
Lurk the germs of all the legends!

WM. BEATTY-KINGSTON.

“A SORROW.”

Jcast a sorrow to the sea
That was most wearisome to me;
But what I fain had known no more
A sportive wavelet washed ashore.
I flung it then upon the air
For winds to waft, I car'd not where;
But lo! a zephyr wand'ring nigh
Restored it on a perfum'd sigh.
I laid it on the sun's last ray
And deem'd 'twould perish with the day;
But scarce had passed night's soothing close,
When with the early morn it rose.
And now that sorrow buried deep
Within my passive heart I keep,
And know that I must bear its pain,
As long as life and thought remain.

GERTRUDE HARRADEN.

ROME is the nursery of art in more senses than one. The municipality have forbidden the performance of serious opera at the Teatro Argentina lest it should injure the business of the Teatro Apollo! What nursing could be more tender than this?

AN American writer defines a difficult horn passage as “getting thrown over a fence by a mad bull.”

MR. MACKENZIE and Mr. Joseph Bennett will probably collaborate in the production of another oratorio.

RUBINSTEIN will, it is said, visit us this summer, for the purpose of conducting the first performance of his oratorio, *Paradise Lost*. It is to be hoped that he will also give some recitals.

MADAME MARIE RÔZE will be one of the representative artists chosen by the French Government to sing at the Musical Festival which is to be held next month at the Grand Opéra, in aid of the relief fund for the Paris poor.

NINETY overtures were sent to the Secretary of the Philharmonic Society in competition for the prize of twenty guineas offered for the best concert overture. The result was the award of the prize to a Mr. Gustav Ernest, a Prussian, resident in London. We should have been better pleased had an Englishman been successful, but that pardonable feeling does not lessen our congratulations to the winner.

THERE is one hope for Italian opera left even now. It lies in the revival of works long obsolete, but none the less worthy of performance. The management of the Italian Opera-house in Vienna scored a success recently in the reproduction of Cimarosa's *Matrimonio Segreto*, and have been encouraged thereby to revive another old comic opera, Paisiello's *La Serva Padrona*. The true music of the future is, perhaps, the music of the past.

A NEW three-manual organ has just been erected by A. Gern, of Notting Hill, in St. Stephen's Church, Ealing, on the tubular pneumatic system, which admits of the keyboards being placed in a console near the chancel, though the instrument stands in the south transept. It was opened by Dr. C. J. Frost on January 25th, who in addition to playing the two services gave a recital after each, and exhibited to advantage its admirable qualities.

AT a Concert given recently in Alleghany City, an excellent practical joke was perpetrated upon the audience. Several of the artists failed to put in an appearance at the appointed time, so three of the punctual ones resolved to extricate themselves from an awkward position, by announcing to the audience that they would perform a trio by Wagner. Accordingly each went on the platform with his instrument, and played as the fancy moved him. The amateurs in front were thoroughly deceived, and “melted in admiration.”

“AMONG the recent operatic revivals,” says the Boston *Musical Herald*, “we have had a resuscitation of Gounod's unsuccessful opera of *Mirella*. Instead of thus endeavouring to put life into the dry bones of the failures of modern composers, why should not some manager, who really cares for music (of course, this does not refer to Mapleson), revive the grand old operas of Gluck? To be sure, the *prima donna* would not have her usual chance to send off sky-rockets of musical rapidity, but there would be plenty of opportunities for earnest dramatic singing; and we believe that the general public would keenly appreciate an opportunity of hearing so important a school of composition as is represented by the operas of Gluck.” That is our belief also.

